



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/779,880 | 02/18/2004 | Haruki Yoshida | Q79957 | 9500 |

23373 7590 03/13/2007
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

| |
|----------|
| EXAMINER |
|----------|

LE, THANH TAM T

| | |
|----------|--------------|
| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

2839

| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | MAIL DATE | DELIVERY MODE |
|----------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| 2 MONTHS | 03/13/2007 | PAPER |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

MAILED
MAR 13 2007
GROUP 2800

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES**

Application Number: 10/779,880
Filing Date: February 18, 2004
Appellant(s): YOSHIDA ET AL.

Allison M. Tulino
(Reg. No. 48,294)
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed 9/27/06 appealing from the Office action mailed 3/31/06.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying by name the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

The following are the related appeals, interferences, and judicial proceedings known to the examiner which may be related to, directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal:

None.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The summary of claimed subject matter contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The appellant's statement of the grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal is correct.

Art Unit: 2839

(7) Claims Appendix

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

The Claims Appendix fails to conform to claim identifiers of 37 CFR 1.121 (c); therefore, the claims are interpreted to carry the claim identifiers presented on 12/8/2005.

(8) Evidence Relied Upon

6851976

Ichida et al.

02-2005

Applicant's submitted Prior Art.

(9) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claims 1, 4-5, 7-9 and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichida et al. (6,851,976) in view of Applicant's submitted Prior Art (APA).

Regarding claim 1, Ichida et al., figures 8 and 9 show a female terminal comprising:

a terminal-inserting portion having a bottom wall (41, with an up side down of figure 8) and a resilient contact piece portion (38) extending rearwardly from a front end edge (not labeled) of the bottom wall to a free end portion (not labeled);

wherein the resilient contact piece portion including a first curved portion (39) by which the male terminal (not shown) is clamped; and

wherein the resilient contact piece portion including a beginning portion (not labeled) extending from the front edge to the first curved portion and an intermediate

Art Unit: 2839

portion (not labeled) extending from the first curved portion, that are provided substantially in parallel to the bottom wall at a predetermined clearance, so that the resilient contact piece portion extends substantially parallel to the bottom wall except for the first curved portion.

Ichida et al. disclose the claimed invention as described above except for a convex portion is formed at the free end portion of the resilient contact and is brought into contact with the bottom wall.

APA, figure 3 shows a female contact (1) having a resilient contact (6) with a convex portion (6a) at a free end portion of the resilient contact. It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Ichida et al. to have the convex portion, as taught by APA in order to not to become caught by the bottom wall during the sliding movement.

Regarding claim 4, Ichida et al., figure 8 shows a second curved portion (43) on a top wall (36) of the terminal-inserting portion.

Regarding claim 5, Ichida et al. disclose the first and second curved portions are opposed to each other.

Regarding claim 7, Ichida et al., figure 8 shows a third curved portion (42) is formed on the bottom wall at a position corresponding to the first curved portion.

Regarding claim 8, it is noted that APA shows the convex portion having a semi-arc shape in cross-section.

Regarding claim 9, the combinations of Ichida et al. and APA disclose the convex portion is spaced from the bottom wall when the male terminal has not been inserted.

Art Unit: 2839

Regarding claim 12, the combinations of Ichida et al. and APA disclose the first curved portion and the convex portion are spaced apart from each other by a predetermined distance.

Regarding claim 13, Ichida et al. disclose two end support points of the resilient contact piece portion are formed so that a distance between the two end support points is kept constant upon insertion of the male terminal.

(10) Response to Argument

Applicant argues Ichida fails to disclose a resilient contact piece portion has beginning and intermediate portions that are substantially in parallel to the bottom wall, as recited in claim 1.

The Examiner respectfully disagrees.

The applied reference of Ichida et al. satisfies all the claim limitations. The Appellant's disclosure fails to define degrees of parallelism associated with the phrase "substantially parallel", hence the applied reference of Ichida et al. meets "substantially in parallel to said bottom wall" as recited in Claim 1. The Appellant also has not clearly stated any specific advantage associated with this claim limitations.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejection should be sustained.

Art Unit: 2839

(11) Related Proceeding(s) Appendix

No decision rendered by a court or the Board is identified by the examiner in the Related Appeals and Interferences section of this examiner's answer.

Respectfully submitted,

TL.

12/21/06.

Conferees:

Ricky Mack



TC. Patel



Thanh-Tam Le

